QUICK FACTS:

- Landscape irrigation accounts for almost half of residential water use in the summer.
- A lawn sprinkler spraying five gallons per minute uses 50% more water in one hour than ten toilet flushes, two 5-minute showers, two dishwasher loads and a full load of laundry!
- Most lawns only need one inch of water per week, either from rain or irrigation, to stay healthy and green.



 The use of certain chemicals on lawns and gardens can contribute to pollution of our soil, water and air, and can pose a risk to good health for humans and animals.

BE YOUR OWN EXPERT:

- Lawn maintenance practices should be considered as a whole when it comes to water consumption. Watering, fertilizing, and mowing all contribute to your total water usage.
- Before applying fertilizers, identify your soil's needs with a soils test.
- Before applying pesticides, identify your pests and spot-treat problem areas only as needed.
- Before watering, know your grass type, adjust sprinkler nozzles to avoid pavement, and check soil moisture.

For More Information:

- University of Illinois Extension website:

 Lawn Talk: Lawn Care Information for Northern

 Illinois http://urbanext.illinois.edu.lawntalk/
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 website: Healthy Lawn, Healthy Environment
 http://www.epa.gov/region7/pesticides
 pest-garden-brochure.pdf
- Cornell University website: Lawn Care
 http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/lawn/
 lawncare/index.html
 - Soil-test Labs in Illinois
 http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/soiltest/

Have you ever considered a...



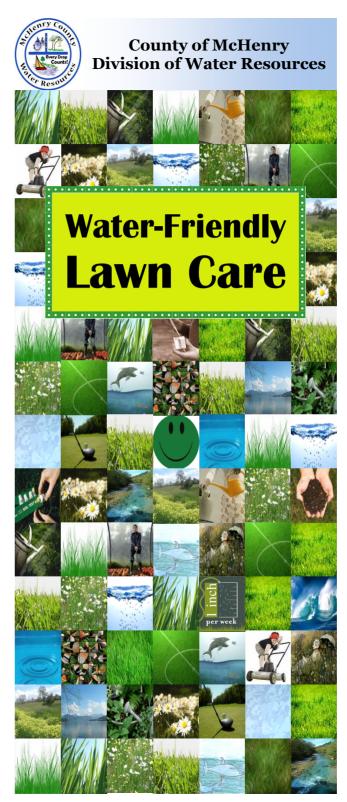
Download this brochure and others at www.mchenryh2o.com



County of McHenry Division of Water Resources

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www.mchenryh2o.com



WATER IN McHENRY COUNTY

McHenry County residents currently enjoy the low-cost availability of high-quality water that is pumped from underground aquifers. However, with an expected population growth of 190,000 between the years 2000 and 2030, some professionals project that portions of McHenry County may experience water shortages as early as 2030.

Increased pumping on stressed aquifer systems could lead to:

- Drinking water shortages
- Higher water costs
- Degraded water quality
- Environmental impacts such as dropping water levels in lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands

With proper lawn care and water conservation efforts, we can reduce seasonal water demands and minimize pumping from our underground aquifers.

Also, by understanding the nutrient needs of our soils and plants, and by limiting our use of chemicals, we can minimize the impact of lawn care practices on our water quality.



Watering

- Conserve water. Let your lawn go dormant in summer. Most established lawns need just 1/4" to 1/2" of water or rain every 2-4 weeks to stay alive during dormancy. They green up in cooler weather.
- If you don't let your lawn go dormant, water deeply and early in the day. Watering in the morning minimizes evaporation and reduces disease potential. Lawns need 1" of water per week to encourage deep roots that withstand drought.
- Don't water when rain is forecast or on windy days. After a rain shower, skip watering until the grass dries and you begin to leave footprints.
- Know your grass type. Some grass types require more water than others. Cool-season grasses such as Bluegrass, Bentgrass or Ryegrass should not go without water for more than four or five days in hot weather.
- Vary your watering regimen by the season: Your lawn needs half as much water in the spring and fall than it does in July or August.



- Check your sprinklers for leaks or misdirected nozzles.
- Replace your sprinkler system with a waterefficient system that includes a moisture or rain sensor and an automatic timer.



- Use drip irrigation where possible.
- **Test your soil:** Water only when a probe or screwdriver is difficult to push into the ground or shows that the soil is dry 4 6 inches down.

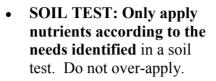
Mowing

- **Mow high.** Leaving 3 inches or more in the summer encourages deep roots and healthy grass that withstands drought and minimizes weeds.
- Mow with a sharp blade to give a cleaner cut and reduce disease potential. Never remove more than 1/3 of the grass blade at a time.



• Leave clippings of 1" or less on the lawn. This provides many nutrients and it also improves the soil.

Fertilizers





- Learn about fertilizer choices and application timing. Avoid fertilizing during summer months. Fertilizing more than twice a year requires more watering and mowing, and may also increase disease and insect problems.
- Do not apply chemicals when it is windy or when rain is in the forecast.
- Avoid applying pesticide or fertilizer to driveways, sidewalks, patios or roadways, and keep them out of water streams or storm drains.
- Maintain a buffer area that has had fertilizer or pesticides applied to it to keep chemicals out of any surface water source, paved surface, or food area.
- Clean and fill applicator equipment on grassy areas in case of a spill.
- **Dispose of unused chemicals properly.** Check the label for instructions.



Pesticides

- **Mow high** to minimize weeds.
- Look before you treat, know where your pests are.
- Only use pesticides when truly necessary. Sometimes a pest problem can be confused with a need for more water or fertilizer. Also, a pest problem can often be cured without harmful chemicals by handpicking pests or hand-weeding.
- Take a preventive approach.

 Make sure that your new or
 existing plants do not have any
 pest problems before you plant.
 In the case of vegetables, it is
 good practice to rotate your
 plants to prevent disease from
 occurring in the first place.
- Identify the weed or pest.

 Timing and control methods vary.

 Some insecticides only treat pests in a particular stage of life. Also, some insects such as the praying mantis, lacewig larvae, and ladybugs are good for your garden and you would want to keep them around.
- **Spot treat,** instead of treating the whole lawn.
- Read and follow the label!

